



U.S. Department of Justice

United States Attorney

Eastern District of Pennsylvania

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For Immediate Release

May 28, 2009

**PHILADELPHIA MAN CHARGED WITH DEFRAUDING SHERIFF'S OFFICE AND
OTHERS OF OVER \$650,000**

PHILADELPHIA - United States Attorney Michael L. Levy today announced the filing of a superseding indictment¹ against Amin A. Rashid, a/k/a "Lawrence D. Wilson," charging him with mail fraud, aggravated identity theft, and passing an altered postal money order. The indictment alleges that, over two years, Rashid defrauded the Philadelphia Sheriff's Office and others of over \$650,000.

According to the indictment, from at least December 2005 to August 2008, the defendant operated The Center for Constitutional and Criminal Justice, a company that he operated under the guise of helping the prior owners of properties sold at Sheriff's sales. Rashid told these prior owners that he could help recover the properties or proceeds from the Sheriff's sales. Rashid took fees from these clients and photocopies of their drivers licenses but typically did nothing in return.

The indictment further alleges that Rashid submitted fraudulent identification documents and forged power of attorney documents to the Sheriff and the Sheriff's agent in order to collect Sheriff's sale proceeds. Rashid submitted forged power of attorney documents that purportedly carried the signatures of the prior owners of the properties sold by the Sheriff and the dates of their purported signatures. Some of those prior owners, however, had died prior to the dates of their purported signatures.

In addition, the indictment alleges that the defendant submitted photocopies of fraudulent driver's licenses of these deceased prior owners. These driver's licenses, however, were photocopies of the driver's licenses of Rashid's clients that Rashid altered to include the deceased prior owners' names and property addresses, and still contained the photographs, dates of birth, and driver's license numbers of his clients.

¹An Indictment is an accusation. A defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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The indictment further alleges that the defendant submitted to the Sheriff and the Sheriff's agent bogus corporate resolutions that purportedly authorized Rashid and his attorney to collect any proceeds from Sheriff's sales of properties last owned by these corporations. Rashid used his family members to pose as officers of these corporations.

According to the indictment, Rashid fraudulently secured more than \$50,000 from two clients under the guise of holding their money in "escrow" while he purportedly attempted to help them buy back their property. Rashid did nothing for these two clients and kept the \$50,000 for himself.

INFORMATION REGARDING THE DEFENDANT

NAME	ADDRESS	AGE OR YEAR OF BIRTH
AMIN A. RASHID a/k/a "Lawrence D. Wilson"	Philadelphia, PA	1949

If convicted, the defendant faces a maximum possible sentence of 221 years in prison, three years of supervised release, a \$4.75 million fine, \$1900 in special assessments, full restitution to all victims of his alleged crimes, and forfeiture of the proceeds of his alleged crimes.

The case was investigated by the United States Postal Inspection Service, the Philadelphia County District Attorney's Office and the Philadelphia Police and is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Vineet Gauri.

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